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## Straight Talk About Sexual Purity



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**MONICA WAS RAISED IN A CHRISTIAN HOME WITH MORAL PRINCIPLES SHE HELD DEAR. AS A YOUNG ADULT SHE BEGAN DATING ANDREW. HE WASN'T A CHRISTIAN, BUT THERE WERE NO AVAILABLE CHRISTIAN FELLOWS TO DATE, SO SHE CONTINUED TO DATE HIM.**

He was fun, interesting and polite but had a different agenda than Monica. They were getting into some pretty steamy petting episodes with him pushing hard for more. Monica didn't like this part of their relationship, but in order to have a boy friend she decided to put up with it and just be careful. It wasn't long before he pushed her further than she ever dreamed anyone could. Pure disgust haunted her from then on.

Petting is a powerful force. Those who engage in it tend to make up the rules as they move along, because few know the rules. Petting is a step beyond hugging and kissing and yet not as far as sexual intercourse. This leaves a wide range of body exploring activities open to question, guess and negotiation.

When a fellow begins fondling a woman's body, he is testing the waters. How far will she let me go, he wonders. He enjoys this testing process immensely since it is sexually pleasurable. His mind races with anticipation as he thinks about what lies ahead. At this point he may deliver his best line. "I've never loved anyone the way I love you, Baby." His hormones are pumping and he is likely to say or do anything to get what he wants.

Her agenda is likely very different. She enjoys the hugging, holding, and kissing. And as she surrenders to his kiss and caress, her emotional need for romance, love and emotional security are being met.

### WAIT A MINUTE!

To engage in such intimacy outside of marriage, simply for the thrill of sexual pleasure, to enjoy the stimulation of the moment, just to make you feel good, is very selfish and self-centered. Likewise to allow someone to fondle your body before marriage, just to feel loved and secure is equally selfish. Particularly is this true in a casual dating relationship where a couple have no plans to marry each other. This cheapens a relationship. The risks are high and the rewards are low.

Let's clear something up. Petting is not "dirty." Within marriage, petting is a beautiful experience. It is the natural expression of love called foreplay, which leads directly to sexual intercourse. What then, is the difference between petting and foreplay? Their purpose. Petting is the exploration of a partner's body by two unmarried persons who do not intend for intercourse to occur.

And that's the trouble with petting. It doesn't stand alone. It moves naturally to intercourse. By itself, outside of marriage, it is more frustrating than satisfying. Our bodies were designed and created by God to respond to petting by becoming sexually aroused and desiring intercourse.

When an unmarried couple engage in petting with the intention of not having intercourse, they must constantly be on guard to stop, lest it go too far. Petting, or foreplay, was not designed to stop on command. One who habitually progresses to intimate kissing and petting and then stops, risks the possibility of sexual malfunction in marriage.

Petting might be likened to crossing a bridge that spans a wide gorge. On one side is intercourse and on the other no physical expression of love. When petting you can be a quarter of the way across, halfway or nine-tenths across the bridge. It's so exciting that it's easy to find yourself across the bridge

before you realize it.

Crossing the bridge doesn't always happen all at once. But petting is dangerously progressive. Each level of excitement demands the next level. It is a powerful force for those in love who feel the sexual chemistry between them escalating.

## **PAIR BONDING**

But people always want to know: What's right and what's wrong before marriage? The unstated question is: "How far can I go and still not sin?" There are many gray areas for which the Bible provides no clear-cut guidelines. However, I have discovered research about pair bonding that lays an excellent foundation for making decisions.

Pair bonding was first reported by secular zoologist Desmond Morris in *Intimate Behavior*. However, it was a lecture by Dr. Donald Joy on pair bonding that opened my eyes to the importance of pair bonding in dating. Pair-bonding encompasses the physical, but also includes emotional, spiritual and intellectual components. .

The twelve steps listed here were found to be consistently present in 80 percent of the five hundred cultures Morris studied.

## **THE TWELVE STEP TO PAIR BONDING.**

### **Stage 1: No Touch**

#### **Step 1: Eye to Body**

First glance is not sexual look but the look of discovery. First glance takes in size, shape, coloring, age, and personality. Immediately an unconscious grading process begins, rating the person on a scale of low to high desirability. First glance determines whether or not the relationship progresses.

#### **Step 2: Eye to Eye**

This will frequently occur in a library or office setting. When the eyes meet there will be a quickening of the heartbeat along with the flush of embarrassment, causing a breaking of the gaze and glancing away. Direct eye contact is reserved for those we know and trust. So two people who see each other for the first time will usually look each other over sequentially rather than simultaneously. Unless the eyes convey a message of interest, the relationship will probably not proceed.

#### **Step 3: Voice to Voice**

At first, the couple's conversation involve small talk such as each other's name, where they live, what they do for a living, the weather. Such small talk, however, permits further observation and analysis. If the couple continues to talk they can really get to know each other, including opinions, pastimes, hobbies, ideas, likes and dislikes, hopes and dreams for the future. Compatibility can be determined here. A couple should spend many hours at step 3. I stress as many as 1,000 hours talking on the phone while acquiring skills that will be critical to their relationship and possible marriage later on. Each is exploring his or her inner self and becoming vulnerable, a major task when intimacy is developing. This step cannot and should not be ignored. The relationship needs to be slowed down now, before romantic touch begin. After romantic affection begins, the couple will interact differently.

### **Stage 2: First Touch**

During the second stage of bonding, the couple spend much time talking, but eye contact remains limited. Touch begins but none of it is directly sexual. Prolonged hugging or open-mouth kissing would rush the bonding process and awaken sexual responses ahead of schedule.

#### **Step 4: Hand to Hand.**

First touch may be innocent—a handshake, or touching while assisting a woman through a doorway. If she pulls away from his touch, it signals him she is not ready for more. But if his touch is received warmly, the relationship may move to hand holding. Holding hands is evidence of a growing attachment between them. First touch is also a social statement that says, "I have someone who enjoys being with me."

#### **Step 5: Arm to shoulder**

Soon the thrill of holding hands subsides and a new plateau is needed to show continued interest. During hand holding the bodies have not been that close, but arm-to-shoulder pulls the trunks of the bodies into close contact and the thrill returns. The shoulder embrace says more than holding hands does. It's a gesture of ownership that states, "This relationship is going someplace." There is still limited eye contact and verbals but closer body

contact.

#### **Step 6: Arm to Waist**

The excitement of holding hands and arm-to-shoulder eventually wears thin. So to bring back the thrill, the couple move to arm to waist which displays more ownership of the body. The arm around the waist clearly signals romantic interest. Notice also that the hands are moving down the body closer to the genitals. You might observe a couple walking down the street, each wearing jeans, in the step 6 position. Sometimes each will slip a thumb inside the back pocket with the hand resting directly on the buttocks. He knows exactly where his hand is and may be entertaining some interesting thoughts: If I can touch her here outside the clothing, I wonder if I might touch her inside the clothes.

Couples can frequently be observed at this stage of bonding on a school campus, or at a park. Their bodies are close but they appear to be looking down, talking to their feet. Deep levels of communication develop at this step. Personal disclosures are made. The basic issues of life are discussed and evaluated. Many personal secrets are shared and a couple really get to know each other at a deeply personal level.

Values, goals, and beliefs must be scrutinized closely because it is now that the future of the relationship must be made—whether it should progress or end. Enough personal disclosures have been shared so that compatibility can be evaluated. If serious doubts or questions exist, now is the time to say good-bye. Proceeding to step 7 or beyond and then separating can leave deep and painful scars because by then the bond is so well formed.

### **Stage 3: Intimate Contact**

At this stage the couple face one another. Although no direct sexual contact occurs, the change in body positions puts sex on a hidden agenda that both become acutely aware of. Any genital contact would bring on intercourse and could scar the formation of a healthy bond, introduce an undercurrent of mistrust, and haunt the pair later should they marry. Communication is different. Until now the couple has been developing their communication skills. Now the verbals shut down and eye contact and nonverbals take over.

#### **Step 7: Face to Face**

As the couple moves face to face, three types of contact take place: hugging, deep kissing and prolonged eye contact. The verbals shut down and close body contact in this frontal position combined with open-mouth kissing and tongue thrusting bring on strong sexual arousal, particularly when repeated or prolonged. Much restraint must now be exercised now since the position excites sexual sensitivities. If the couple has taken time to talk through important issues deep communication can take place with few words. Eye contact becomes long and pronounced. Verbal communication tends to shut down while the couple reads each other's face.

A couple must guard their display of physical affection carefully from now on as all sexual motors are racing.

#### **Step 8: Hand to Head**

Here one's hand is used to caress the head of the other while kissing or talking. This intimate gesture is reserved for those where a high level of trust has been developed. Few people engage in head-touching unless they are in love or are family members. This act, then, denotes emotional closeness, a deep bond of friendship, love, and caring.

#### **Step 9: Hand to Body**

Now the hands explore the partner's body. Breast fondling becomes important for the male. In the early stages of step 9 the hands remain outside the clothing. Later the hands will move underneath the clothing but stay above the waist. Step 9 is dangerously progressive and includes back rubs and other caressing. Each time the couple goes to step 9 they have more trouble stopping at step 9. It is usually now that the female recognizes she must call a halt or it will be too late.

### **Stage 4: One Flesh**

Ultimate intimacy is achieved.

#### **Step 10: Mouth to Breast**

Step ten requires the baring of the female breast and demands utmost privacy. The couple is not only concerned with pleasure and arousal but intend to complete the sex act.

#### **Step 11: Hand to Genital.**

The hands drop below the waist. Sexual arousal and foreplay are well under way in this last and most intimate stage of genital fondling. Mutual masturbation involves fondling the genitals to attain climax without intercourse. This is done in a vain attempt to retain virginity for marriage and to avoid pregnancy and STDs. Faulty reasoning!. The dictionary defines virgin as "a person of either sex remaining in a state of chastity." This definition shows that purity has already been lost since touching the genitals of a partner would hardly be considered chaste, pure, or virtuous in any culture. Technically it is only a breath or two away from intercourse.

#### **Step 12: Genital to Genital**

The pair-bonding process escalates to its highest level of sexual desire and is complete with penetration and intercourse. A pair bond is thus formed by progressing through these twelve steps. But the goal should be more than sexual pleasure. The goal of bonding is to develop a strong unbreakable bond.

### **THE RESULTS OF RUSHING OR SKIPPING STEPS**

When the twelve-step bonding process is rushed, several harmful things can happen.

1. When steps are skipped or rushed the bond is weakened and tends to break or become deformed. This happens because the couple did not take time to talk through the important issues—values, goals, and beliefs—prior to becoming physically involved. Once the sexual motors get turned on, people forget other aspect of relationship building. It is easier and faster to get to know each other physically then emotionally, socially, and spiritually. This is probably the greatest contributor to rising divorce statistics.
2. After a couple break up, the tendency is to accelerate the steps with the next partner. Each level of sexual excitement is so immediately rewarding it becomes nearly impossible to be satisfied with lower levels. The long-term consequence of uninhibited sexual freedom is difficulty settling down to one partner after multiple matings.
3. A sexually experienced person will tend to rush a new partner to intercourse. A person who is used to proceeding through all twelve steps of sexual arousal without stopping will find it difficult to slow the process or stop at steps 7, 8, or 9.

Now that the twelve pair-bonding steps have been outlined we can better determine what is appropriate for each stage of dating. Your values committed to God, along with how much you value yourself, dictate your choices. As you map out your intentions remember that everyone crossing the boundary from step 6 or 7 risks the trauma that follows a divorce due to the intensity of the bond. Steps 9 - 12 have no place in a relationship prior to the wedding ceremony.

### **AN INVITATION TO SEXUAL PURITY**

God's plan for our lives is perfect and has never changed. Sexual intimacy for marrieds is God's special design for procreation and our enjoyment. This is the only lifestyle that offers complete happiness. In the eyes of the world, the choice to remain sexually pure prior to marriage may seem unrealistic, but the facts supporting such a choice remain in your favor. Your sexuality might be considered a gift from God marked, "For greatest enjoyment, do not open till married."

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